



VERIFICATION OF TRANSLATION

Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-180275

Filed on June 15, 2000

I, Akira HIRAKAWA, a citizen of Japan and the translator of the document attached, whose address is c/o SHUWA CHIZAI INC., Acropolis 21 Building, 6th Floor, 4-10, Higashi Nihonbashi 3-chome, Chuo-Ku, Tokyo, Japan, state that the following is a true translation of the Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-180275 filed on June 15, 2000 to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed at Tokyo, Japan
This 13th day of December, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Akira Hirakawa".

Akira HIRAKAWA
Patent Attorney
SHUWA CHIZAI INC.

PATENT OFFICE
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

This is to certify that the annexed is a true copy of the following application as filed with this Office.

Date of Application : June 15, 2000

Application Number : 2000-180275

Applicant : TSUBASA SYSTEM CO. LTD.

October 20, 2000

Kohzo OIKAWA Seal
Commissioner,
Patent Office

[Name of Document] Application for Patent
[Reference] P-7567
[Date of Filing] June 15, 2000
[Addressee] Commissioner of The Patent Office
[International Classification of Patent] G06F 15/00
[Title of Invention] CAR SALE INFORMATION PROVIDING SYSTEM AND A METHOD THEREOF
[Number of Claims] 5
[Inventor]
 [Address or Residence] c/o TSUBASA SYSTEM CO., LTD.
 25-14, Kameido 2-chome, Koutou-ku, Tokyo, Japan
 [Name] Akira WAKABAYASHI
[Applicant]
 [ID Number] 594057314
 [Name] TSUBASA SYSTEM CO., LTD.
[Attorney]
 [ID. Number] 100089244
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] Tsutomu TOYAMA
[Appointed Attorney]
 [I.D. Number] 100090516
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] Hidemi MATSUKURA
 [Telephone Number] 03-3669-6571
[Appointed Attorney]
 [ID Number] 100098268
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] Yutaka NAGATA
[Appointed Attorney]
 [ID Number] 100100549
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] Yoshiyuki KAWAGUCHI
[Indication of Official Fee]
 [Ledger Number] 012092
 [Amount] 21000

[List of Documents submitted]

[Name of Document]	Specification	1 copy
[Name of Document]	Drawings	1 set
[Name of Document]	Abstract	1 copy
[General Power of Attorney Number]	9714611	
[Requiring Proof or Not]	Yes	

[Name of Document] SPECIFICATION

[Title of the Invention] CAR SALE INFORMATION PROVIDING SYSTEM AND
A METHOD THEREOF

[Scope of Claims]

[Claim 1] A car sale information providing system comprising:
a car information storage means stored with mappings of car
information containing a name, a type, a year model etc of a car
to car inspection information obtained as a result of inspecting
the car concerned;

a car information input means inputting the car information
and getting the car information stored in said car information storage
means;

a search means outputting an input screen to input conditions
when searching the car information stored in said car information
storage means, and searching based on conditions inputted; and

a car information output means outputting display information,
including a purchase indication interface transmitting car purchase
information containing the searched car information and the car
inspection information corresponding to the car information.

[Claim 2] A car sale information providing system according
to claim 1, further comprising an inspection indication output means
for outputting inspection indicative information for prompting an
inspection of an uninspected car, corresponding to the input of
said car information input means,

wherein said car information input means gets the car information
of the uninspected car stored in said car information storage means

in a state where the same car information is not searchable by said search means, and

 said car information storage means changes the car information to a searchable state in accordance with an input of the car inspection information created from the inspection based on the inspection indicative information.

[Claim 3] A car sale information providing method comprising:
 a step of storing car information containing a name, a type, a year model etc. of a car and car inspection information obtained as a result of inspecting the car concerned;
 a step of inputting the car information and storing said information in car information storage means;
 a step of outputting an input screen for searching the car information and searching based on conditions inputted;
 a step of displaying the searched car information and the car inspection information corresponding thereto; and
 a step of transmitting car purchase information.

[Claim 4] A car sale information providing method according to claim 3, further comprising:

 a step of outputting inspection indicative information for prompting an inspection of an uninspected car, corresponding to the input of car information input means;
 a step of storing the car information of an uninspected car in a state where the same car information is not searchable in said searching; and

a step of changing the car information to a searchable state in accordance with an input of the car inspection information created from the inspection based on the inspection indicative information.

[Claim 5] A car sale information providing method for displaying car information containing at least a name, a type, a year model etc. of a car and car inspection information thereof on a display screen on a terminal device connected to a host device.

[DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION]

[0001]

[Technical Field of the Invention]

The present invention relates generally to an online used-car dealing technology, and more particularly to an online system effective in an inter-dealer transaction.

[0002]

[Prior Art]

A used-car dealer, when receiving an inquiry about a used car from a general customer and if a dealer's stock does not have the car meeting requirements of the customer, searches the car desired by the customer with reference to a used-car database structured through a network in linkage with the used-car dealers.

[0003]

This type of used-car dealing on the network involves a difficulty for a prospective buyer (dealer) to grasp an actual quality of the used car. Therefore, the prospective buyer is unable to determine the purchase only from a photo obtained from the database and

assessment information given by a sales member.

[0004]

In such a case, heretofore, the prospective buyer searches the used cars from the database and, after finding out the desired car, asks an inspector to check the car by telephone or FAX etc. Then, a procedure is taken that a sales price and other dealing conditions are finally determined based on a result of the inspection, and a negotiation with the general customer is started.

[0005]

Therefore, it takes at least 2 ~ 3 days till the purchase is determined since the desired car was searched and found out.

[0006]

[Problems to be Solved by the Invention]

The present invention was made in view of the conventional technical problems. The present invention is to provide an information processing technology capable of speeding up a process that a prospective buyer of a used car determines an intention of purchasing it.

[0007]

[Means for Solving the Problems]

In order to solve the above-described problems, the present invention adopts the following means.

[0008]

Namely, the present invention is a car sale information providing system comprises:

car information storage means (13, 14) stored with mappings of car information containing at least a name, a type, a year model

of a car and a car inspection information obtained as a result of inspecting the car concerned, car information input means (27, 28) for inputting the car information and getting the car information stored in the car information storage means (13, 14),

search means (12) for outputting an input screen to input condition when searching the car information stored in the car information storage means (13, 14), and searching based on conditions inputted, and

car information output means (26), for outputting display information, including a purchase indication interface (44) for transmitting car purchase information containing the searched car information and the car inspection information corresponding to the car information.

[0009]

The car sale information providing system may further comprise inspection indication output means (2b, 26) for outputting inspection indicative information for prompting an inspection of an uninspected car, corresponding to the input of the car information input means (27, 28), wherein the car information input means (27, 28) gets the car information of the uninspected car stored in the car information storage means (13, 14) in a state where the same car information is not searchable by the search means, and

wherein the car information storage means (13, 14) changes the car information to a searchable state in accordance with an input of the car inspection information created from the inspection based on the inspection indicative information.

[0010]

The present invention is a car sale information providing method for displaying car information containing at least a name, a type, a year model of a car and inspection information of the car on a display screen on a terminal device connected to a host device.

[0011]

[PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION]

Preferred Embodiments of the present invention will hereinafter be described with reference to the accompanying drawings FIG. 1 to FIG. 15

[0012]

FIG. 1 is a system configuration diagram of a car sale information providing system according to an embodiment of the present invention, FIG. 2 is a hardware configuration diagram of a server 1 shown in FIG. 1, FIG. 3 is a hardware configuration diagram of a terminal device such as a member terminal 2 shown in FIG. 1, FIG. 4 through FIG. 7 shown examples of screen displayed in the member terminal 2, FIG. 8 through FIG. 13 are flowcharts each showing processes of a server program executed by a CPU 12 of the server 1, and FIG. 14 and FIG. 15 are flowcharts each showing processes of a program executed in the terminal device such as the member terminal 2.

<System Configuration>

FIG. 1 shows the system configuration of the car sale information providing system. This system is configured by the server 1 installed in a management company for managing the information, the member terminals 2 installed in sales companies that sell the cars or in homes of users who purchase the cars, an inspector terminal 2a installed in an office of an inspector, and

a land transportation company terminal 2b installed in a land transportation company.

[0013]

The server 1 includes a used-car database for recording pieces of data such as a name, a type, a year model etc of the car, an inspection certificate database for recording inspection certificate data defined as a result of inspecting the car, a member database for recording members accessing the server 1, and an inspector database for recording the inspectors who inspect the car.

[0014]

Among those databases, the used-car database is structured of a wait-for-registration database, an search database and a wait-for-settlement database.

[0015]

The used-car database (wait-for-registration) (hereinafter referred to as a wait-for-registration database) is registered with uninspected cars with no inspection certificate data.

[0016]

The used-car database (for inspection) (hereinafter referred to as a database for inspection) is inputted with a car inspection information and is registered with purchase target cars of the members.

[0017]

The used-car database (wait-for-settlement) (hereinafter referred to as a wait-for-settlement database) is, after the members have applied for purchasing the cars, registered with these

wait-for-settlement cars.

[0018]

In the member terminal 2, a registration program for registering the sales target cars and a search program for searching the cars to be purchased, are executed. With the execution of these programs, the member terminal 2 accesses to the server 1, thereby providing functions of registering and searching the car information, and of applying for purchase.

[0019]

The inspector terminal 2a notifies the inspector of an inspecting indication. Further, the inspector terminal 2a have the inspector inputs the car inspection information as a result of inspecting the car, and transmits the information to the server 1.

[0020]

The server 1 transmits a land transportation instruction information of the car to be sold to the land transportation company terminal 2b. Hereinafter, the member terminal 2, the inspector terminal 2a and the land transportation company terminal 2b are generically called a terminal device.

<Hardware>

FIG. 2 shows a hardware configuration of the server 1. This server 1 includes a CPU 12 for executing a server program , a memory 13 for storing the server program executed by the CPU 12 and data processed by the CPU 12, a hard disk 14 for recording the server program and the data, a communication interface 15 for communicating with the terminal device such as the member terminal 2 etc., a CRT 16 for displaying a result of processing by the CPU to the operator,

a keyboard 17 for the operator to input the data, and a mouse 18 for the user to manipulate menu or icons etc. on the CRT 16.

[0021]

The CPU 12 executes the server program stored in the memory 13, thereby providing a function as the server 1.

[0022]

The memory 13 stores the server program executed by the CPU 12 and the data processed by the CPU 12.

[0023]

The hard disk 14 records the server program executed by the CPU 12. Further, in the hard disk 14, the wait-for-registration database, the search database, the wait-for-settlement database, the member database and the inspector database, are structured.

[0024]

The communication interface 15 accesses to an unillustrated network according to a command given from the CPU 12, and communicates with the member terminal 2, the inspector terminal 2a and the land transportation company terminal 2b.

[0025]

The CRT 16 displays the data inputted by the user and a result of the processed data.

[0026]

The keyboard 17 is used for the user to input the character information. The pointing device 18 (for example, a mouse, trackball, an electrostatic or an optical pointing device, a touch panel) is used for the user to manipulate the menus and icons displayed on the CRT 16.

[0027]

FIG. 3 shows the hardware configuration of the terminal device. The terminal device includes a CPU 22, a memory 23, a hard disk 24, a communication interface 25, an LCD 26, a keyboard 27, a pointing device 28 and a scanner 29.

[0028]

The configuration of the terminal device is substantially the same as the server 1, however, a different point from the server 1 is that the terminal device includes the LCD 26 in place of the CRT 16 and the scanner 29 for generating the image data of a car photograph and of an inspection certificate.

<Operating Procedure>

[Registration of Car Information]

FIG. 4 shows a registration screen registering information of the used-car (hereinafter referred to a car information). This screen is displayed on the LCD 26 when the member registers a car to be sold from the member terminal 2 to the server 1.

[0029]

This screen contains two columns of information input boxes which are laid out on the right and left sides. The left-sided input boxes on the screen are topped by a member number 2 followed by a name of car maker, a type of car, a name of car, a grade, a shape, an application, an external coating color, a color No. (of coating), an interior coating color, a type of fuel, a gearshift mode, air-conditioned or non-air-conditioned and a kind of air-conditioning, other equipment, a possible car-delivery date and a selling price.

[0030]

Further, the right-sided input boxes on the screen are topped by a frame number and followed by a displacement, a safety check expiration date, a mileage and a sales point. Displayed further are a [photo input] button for inputting a car photo, an [inspection certificate input] button 40 for inputting the inspection certificate data, and a [registration] button 41 for registering the inputted-to-the-screen information in the used-car database.

[0031]

Among them, in the sales point, the car dealer can input comments freely.

[0032]

When pressing the [photo input] button, there is displayed an unillustrated input box for inputting a name of an image file or an unillustrated indication screen indicating take-in of the image to a scanner 29 compatible with TWAIN (a common interface specification for controlling the scanner, which is designed in cooperation by Hewlett-Packard Corp., U.S.A., Eastman Kodak Corp., U.S.A., Logitech Corp., U.S.A., Aldus Corp., U.S.A., and Caere Corp., U.S.A.)

[0033]

Note that the inspection certificate data among those input items is normally inputted by the expert inspector, and therefore it may be acceptable that this data has not yet been inputted when making the registration.

[0034]

In the case where the dealers performs inspection by themselves

according to the rules, the dealers select either inputting the inspection certificate by pressing the [inspection certificate input] button 40 or submitting the inspection certificate by mail. In the case of the inputting, the inspection certificate is inputted in the form of an image of the check record in the same way as that of inputting the [photo input].

[0035]

In the case of selecting the submission by mail, the member terminal 2 notifies the server 1 of this purport. In this case, a car management number is given when the registration is completed, and hence the inspection certificate with the management number described thereon is mailed. Alternatively, a form for mailing the inspection certificate may be printed when the registration is completed.

[0036]

After inputting pieces of data to the respective input boxes, the car information including the photograph, and the inspection certificate data (in the case of the member's inputting by himself or herself) on the screen in FIG. 4, when the [registration] button 41 is pressed by the pointing device 28, the car information is transmitted from the member terminal 2 to the server 1.

[Registration Process in Server 1]

The server 1 checks whether or not the information received contains the inspection certificate data. If the information received contains the inspection certificate data, the server 1 provides a car management number according to the predetermined rules.

[0037]

Further, the server 1 newly registers the car data in the search database and the inspection certificate data in the inspection certificate database. At this time, data registered in the search database and in the inspection certificate database, respectively, are given a car management number that will be used as a search key when the data is searched. Thereafter, the server 1 is to transmit the data of a completion-of-registration screen in FIG. 5 to the member terminal 2. As shown in FIG. 5, on the completion-of-registration screen, a string of characters of [supreme car] in the [sales point] box, a car photo is displayed in the [photo] box, and inspection certificate data are displayed in the [inspection certificate] box.

[0038]

If specified to submit the inspection certificate data by mail, the server 1 provides the car management number according to the predetermined rules, and registers the transmitted car information in the wait-for-registration database. Thereafter, the server 1 transmits the data on the completion-of-registration screen shown in FIG. 5 to the member terminal 2. At this time, however, a remark "not yet inputted" is displayed in the inspection certificate box.

[0039]

In the case where the car information does not contain the inspection certificate data, the server 1 provides the car management number according to the predetermined rules, and registers the transmitted car information in the wait-for-registration database. Thereafter, the server 1 transmits the data on the completion-

of-registration screen shown in FIG. 5 to the terminal. At this time, however, a remark "not yet inputted" is displayed in the inspection certificate box.

[Inspection Indication from Server 1]

In the case where the car information containing no inspection certificate data is inputted, the server 1 obtains an address of the registered member from the member database and further obtains an inspector residing in the vicinity of that address from the inspector database, and notifies this inspector of the inspection indicating information.

[0040]

This inspection indicating information contains the address and name of the registered member, the car information registered in the wait-for-inspection database, and the car management number. The notification of the inspection indicating information may be sent by transmitting it via the network to a dedicated output device installed in an inspector office, by E-mail transmission, by facsimile transmission, or mailing it in a printed form. The destination information of the inspector such as a mail address, a facsimile number and an address which are necessary for those processes, are described in the inspector database in advance.

[Registration of Inspection Certificate]

The inspector, upon receiving the inspection indicating information, goes to the location where the car is present and performs inspection thereof. The car is kept in the office where the inspector terminal 2a is installed. The inspector registers the inspection certificate recorded with a result of inspection of the car by use

of the inspector terminal 2a.

[0041]

FIG. 6 shows a screen for registering the inspection certificate. When the inspector starts an inspection certificate registration program on the inspector terminal 2a and inputs a car management number of the inspection target car, the inspector terminal 2a accesses to the server 1, then reads a corresponding car information from the wait-for-registration database, and displays the data in respective boxes on the screen in FIG. 6.

[0042]

The inspector confirms from the data displayed that the car inspected is identified by the registered car information.

[0043]

An inspection record sheet is set in the scanner 29 connected to the inspector terminal 1a, and by pressing an [inspection certificate input] button 42 by the pointing device 28, the scanner 29 is operated, and images of the inspection record sheet are taken into the inspector terminal 2a. Thereafter, a [registration] button 43 is pressed, thereby the car management number and the images of the inspection record sheet are transmitted to the server 1.

[0044]

The server 1 transfers the record of the car information indicated by the received car management number to the search database from the wait-for-registration database. Further, the server 1 records the received inspection certificate data (the image data of the inspection record sheet) with the car management number in the inspection certificate database.

[Search and Online Dealing (on the Side of Member Terminal)]

FIG. 7 shows a purchase screen displayed when the member purchases a car. The screen is displayed, when starting the search program on the member terminal 2 and specifying items to identify the car information such as a "name of maker", a "name of car", a "price" etc. At this time, the member terminal 2 accesses to the search database and the inspection certificate database of the server 1, and displays the car information related to the specified items.

[0045]

When the member presses a [purchase] button 44 on this display screen, an unillustrated window for a purchaser to input a member number thereof and a password for authentication, is displayed.

[0046]

Next, the member terminal 2 displays the car information and the information such as a car dealing price, a land transportation cost etc., on an unillustrated screen, thereby to obtain the final confirmation of the purchase.

[0047]

Moreover, the server 1 keeps a land transportation costs table setting the cost according to a dispatch place and an arrival place in the memory 13 so that notifies the member terminal 2 of a land transportation cost.

[0048]

In the case where a confirmation of the purchase is obtained on the unillustrated final confirmation screen, purchase information (containing a car management number and a purchaser member number) is transmitted to the server 1 from the member terminal 2.

[Search and Online Dealing (on the Side of Server)]

The server 1 refers to the search database with the car management number used as a key and obtains a sales member number. Next, the server 1 refers to the member database and obtains information on the sales member and the purchaser member therefrom.

[0049]

Subsequently, the server 1 sends the land transportation indicative information (containing the car management number, the car information recorded in the search database, and the information on the purchaser member) of the car concerned to the sales member.

[0050]

Sending of the land transportation indicative information may be effected by transmitting it via the network to a dedicated output device installed in an office of the member, by E-mail, by facsimile, or mailing it in a printed form.

[0051]

Next, the server 1 transfers the car information of the car concerned to the wait-for-settlement database from the search database.

[Settlement]

According to an option of the member, the settlement may be made between the members, or the management company may be commissioned to make the settlement, or an electronic settlement may be implemented by the server 1.

[0052]

In the case where the management company is commissioned to make the settlement, the land transportation indication is given

after confirmation of the payment of the fee (transferred to a bank account specified) by the purchaser member.

[0053]

In the case where the dealing is not established for some reason, for example, according to the operation rules such as "The dealing shall not be established in case of failure of making payment by 14:00 of the day after the purchase indicated date" and so forth, the server 1 transfers the car information of the car concerned to the search database from the wait-for-settlement database, and the car concerned is open to the public.

[0054]

The land transportation company tied up with the management company is notified of the land transportation indicative information (containing the car management number, the car information recorded in the search database, the sales member information (dispatch place), the purchaser member information (destination of the land transportation), etc.) in the same way as sending to the sales members.

<Operation and Effects>

FIGS. 8 through 13 show the processes of the server program executed by the CPU 12 of the server 1. The CPU 12, when the system is started, executes this program, thereby providing a function of the server 1.

[0055]

As shown in FIG. 8, normally the CPU 12 is in a standby status for a request from the terminal device (from S1 to S2). If given the request via the unillustrated network (Yes in S2), the CPU 12

determines the type of the request.

[0056]

To start with, the CPU 12 determines whether or not the request is a car registration request (S3). If the request is the car registration request, the CPU 12 executes a car registration process (S4). Thereafter, the CPU 12 returns the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0057]

If it is not the car registration, the CPU 12 determines whether or not the request is a wait-for-registration data transmission request (S5). If the request is the wait-for-registration data transmission request, the CPU 12 executes a wait-for-registration data transmission process (S6). Thereafter, the CPU 12 again returns the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0058]

If the request is not the wait-for-registration data transmission request, the CPU 12 determines whether or not the request is an inspection certificate registration request (S7). If the request is the inspection certificate registration request, the CPU 12 executes an inspection certificate registration process in the server 1 (S8). Thereafter, the CPU 12 again returns the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0059]

If the request is not the inspection certificate registration request, the CPU 12 determines whether the request is a search or not (S9). If the request is the search, the CPU 12 executes a search process (S10). Thereafter, the CPU 12 again returns the control

to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0060]

If the request is not the search, the CPU 12 determines whether or not the request is a password confirmation request (S11). If the request is the password confirmation request, the CPU 12 executes a password confirmation process (S12). Thereafter, the CPU 12 returns again the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0061]

If the request is not the password confirmation request, the CPU 12 determines whether or not the request is an ordering request (S13). If the request is the ordering request, the CPU 12 executes a sales process (S14). Thereafter, the CPU 12 again returns the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0062]

If the request is not the ordering request, the CPU 12 executes nothing and returns again the control to the standby status for the request (S1).

[0063]

FIG. 9 shows details of the car registration process (S4 in FIG. 8). At first, the CPU 12 receives the car registration data from the terminal device (S41).

[0064]

Next, the CPU 12 checks whether or not the car registration data received contain the inspection certificate data (S43).

[0065]

If the car registration data received contain the inspection certificate data, the CPU 12 provides a car management number

according to the predetermined rules (S44).

[0066]

Next, the CPU 12 registers the car information in the search database (S45).

[0067]

Subsequently, the CPU 12 registers the inspection certificate data in the inspection certificate database (S46). Next, the CPU 12 transmits the data on the completion-of-registration screen in FIG. 5 to the member terminal (S47). Thereafter, the CPU 12 finishes the car registration process.

[0068]

On the other hand, if received information does not include the inspection certificate data, the server 1 provides the car management number in accordance with the predetermined rules (S48).

[0069]

Next, the CPU 12 registers the transmitted car information in the wait-for-registration database (S49). Subsequently, the server 1 transmits the completion-of-registration screen in FIG. 5 to the member terminal 2 (S50). At this time, however, an indication of "not yet inputted" is displayed in the "inspection certificate" box.

[0070]

Subsequently, the CPU 12 obtains an address of the registered member from the member database (S51).

[0071]

Next, the CPU 12 obtains the inspector residing in that address from the inspector database (S52). Thereafter, the CPU 12 sends

the inspection indicative information to this inspector (S53). Thereafter, the CPU 12 finishes the car registration process.

[0072]

FIG. 10 shows details of the wait-for-registration data transmission process (S6 in FIG. 8). To begin with, the CPU 12 receives the car management number from the terminal device (S61). Next, the CPU 12 searches the wait-for-registration database, and transmits the wait-for-registration data of that car management number to the terminal device (S62). Thereafter, the CPU 12 finishes the wait-for-registration data transmission process.

[0073]

FIG. 11 shows details of the inspection certificate data registration process (S8 in FIG. 8) in the server 1. At first, the CPU 12 receives the car management number and the inspection certificate data from the terminal device (S81).

[0074]

Next, the CPU 12 transfers a record of the car information indicated by the received car management number to the search database from the wait-for-registration database (S82). Next, the CPU 12 records the received inspection certificate data (which are the image data of the inspection record sheet) with the car management number in the inspection certificate database. Thereafter, the CPU 12 comes to an end of the wait-for-registration data transmission process.

[0075]

FIG. 12 shows details of the search process (S10 in FIG. 8). First, the CPU 12 receives search keys (a name, a type, a year model

and an exhaust gas quantity of the car) specified by the member from the terminal device (S101).

[0076]

Subsequently, the CPU 12 searches the car information from the search database (S102). At this time, the CPU 12 obtains the car management number.

[0077]

Next, the CPU 12 searches the inspection certificate data from the inspection certificate database based on this car management number (S103).

[0078]

Then, the CPU 12 transmits the car information and the inspection certificate data to the terminal device (S104). Thereafter, the CPU 12 finishes the search process.

[0079]

FIG. 13 shows details of the sales process (S14 in FIG. 8). To start with, the CPU 12 receives the ordering information (containing a car management number of the car to be ordered, and a purchaser member number) from the terminal device (S141).

[0080]

Next, the CPU 12 obtains the member number of the sales member from the search database, based on the car management number. Then, the CPU 12, based on the member number of the sales member and the member number of the purchaser member, searches the information (addresses and so forth) on the sales member and the purchaser member out of the member database (S142).

[0081]

Next, the CPU 12 sends the land transportation indicative information to the sales member (S143).

[0082]

Subsequently, the CPU 12 transfers the car information from the search database to the wait-for-settlement database (S144). Thereafter, the CPU 12 finishes the sales process.

[0083]

FIG.14 and FIG. 15 show processes of programs executed in the member terminal 2 and the like. A CPU 22 of the member terminal 2 executes these programs, thereby providing the functions as the member terminal 2.

[0084]

FIG. 14 shows an inspection certificate registration process in the inspector terminal 2a. In this process, the CPU 22 at first causes the process to input a car management number and also causes the server 1 to search wait-for-registration data corresponding to the inputted car management number, and displays a searched result on the LCD 26 (S200). At this time, the inspector confirms the wait-for-registration car information.

[0085]

Next, the CPU 22 comes to a standby status for inputting the inspection certificate data (S201). When the inspector sets the inspection record sheet in the scanner 29 and presses the [inspection certificate input] button 42, the CPU 22 detects an indication of the registration (Y in S202).

[0086]

Then, the CPU 22 waits for the [registration] button 43 to be

pressed (S203). When the [registration] button 43 is pressed, the CPU 22 transmits to the server 1 the inspection certificate data read from the scanner 29 (S204). Thereafter, the CPU 22 finishes the inspection certificate registration process.

[0087]

FIG. 15 shows a search/ordering process in the member terminal 2. In this process, the CPU 22 instructs the server 1 to search the car information based on the specified search conditions (the name, type, year model and exhaust gas quantity of the car), and displays the searched result on the LCD 26 (S209).

[0088]

If the member does not desire for purchasing and gives an indication of end (Y in S210), the CPU 22 finishes the search/ordering process.

[0089]

If the member does not desire for the purchase but for the search to be performed again (N in S211), the CPU 22 returns the control to the process in S209.

[0090]

When the member presses the [purchase] button 44 (Y in S211), the CPU 22 prompts the member to input a password, and inquires the server 1 about whether the password is identified by the member number or not (S212).

[0091]

If the password is correct, the CPU 22 expressly indicates the car information, a purchase price, a land transportation cost, etc., and have the final confirmation of the data (S214).

[0092]

If the final confirmation is OK, the CPU 22 notifies the server 1 of the information of purchasing (S216). Thereafter, the CPU 22 finishes the search/ordering process.

[0093]

On the other hand, if the member does not consent in the final confirmation (N in S215), the CPU 22 returns the control to S209, and executes searching of the next set of car information.

[0094]

As discussed above, according to the present information system, the prospective buyer of the used-car is able to refer to the inspection data of the used-car concerned together with the car information on the specifications of the used-car searched from the database. Therefore, the present information system speeds up a decision making process of the prospective buyer of the used-car concerned.

[0095]

Further, according to the present information processing system, the dealer is able to search the car information while looking at the screen with the customer, and able to refer to the inspection certificate data of the used-car concerned together with the car information. Therefore, an establishment of the dealing is speeded up. Further, it is feasible to shorten a period of time required for the dealer to make the arrangements for the goods, whereby the demand of the customer can be promptly met.

<Modified Examples of Registration Screen>

In accordance with the embodiment discussed above, the

inspection certificate data is inputted as the image of the inspection record sheet. The embodiment of the present invention is not, however, limited to the above input mode and display mode of the inspection certificate. For instance, the inspection certificate data may be inputted as code data to input boxes provided for every check item of the check record, and the data may be recorded and displayed for every check item.

[0096]

Further, the embodiment of the present invention is not limited to the input device and the input time of the inspection certificate data. For instance, the inspector may mail the inspection record sheet to the management company without using the inspector terminal 2a. The management company having received the inspection record sheet may register the inspection certificate in the same procedure as by mailing from the member.

[0097]

In the embodiment discussed above, the car information is inputted from the registration screen of the member terminal 2. However, instead of this, a registration sheet with entries of necessary items of car information which are made by the sales member, may be sent with a photo to the management company, and the input operations may be executed by the management company.

<Modifications of Structure of Database>

In the embodiment discussed above, the used-car database is structured of the three of databases such as the wait-for-registration database, the search database and the wait-for-settlement database. The embodiment of the present invention is

not, however, limited to this database configuration. For example, the data in those three types of databases may be recorded in a single used-car database, and there may be provided status flags such as a wait-for-registration flag, a search flag (the car being open to the public) and a wait-for-settlement flag (purchase reserved), thus managing the data.

[0098]

[Effects of the Invention]

As described above, according to the present invention, a prospective buyer who desires to purchase a used-car is prompted to make the decision of purchase.

[BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS]

[FIG. 1] A system configuration diagram of a car sale information providing system in a first embodiment of the present invention.

[FIG. 2] A hardware configuration diagram of a server 1.

[FIG. 3] A hardware configuration diagram of a terminal device.

[FIG. 4] A diagram showing a registration screen.

[FIG. 5] A diagram showing a registration completion screen.

[FIG. 6] A diagram showing an inspection certificate registration screen.

[FIG. 7] A diagram showing a purchase screen.

[FIG. 8] A flowchart showing processes of a server program.

[FIG. 9] A flowchart showing a car registration process of the server 1.

[FIG. 10] A flowchart showing a data transmission process of waiting for registration of the server 1.

[FIG. 11] A flowchart showing an inspection certificate registration process of the server 1.

[FIG. 12] A flowchart showing a search process of the server 1.

[FIG. 13] A flowchart showing a sales process of the server 1.

[FIG. 14] A flowchart showing an inspection certificate registration process of a terminal device.

[FIG. 15] A flowchart showing a search/ordering process of a terminal device.

[Description of Reference Numerals]

1 server

2 member terminal

2a inspector terminal

2b land transporting company terminal

12, 22 . . CPU

13, 23 . . memory

14, 24 . . hard disk

15, 25 . . communication interface

16 CRT

17, 27 . . key board

18, 28 . . pointing device

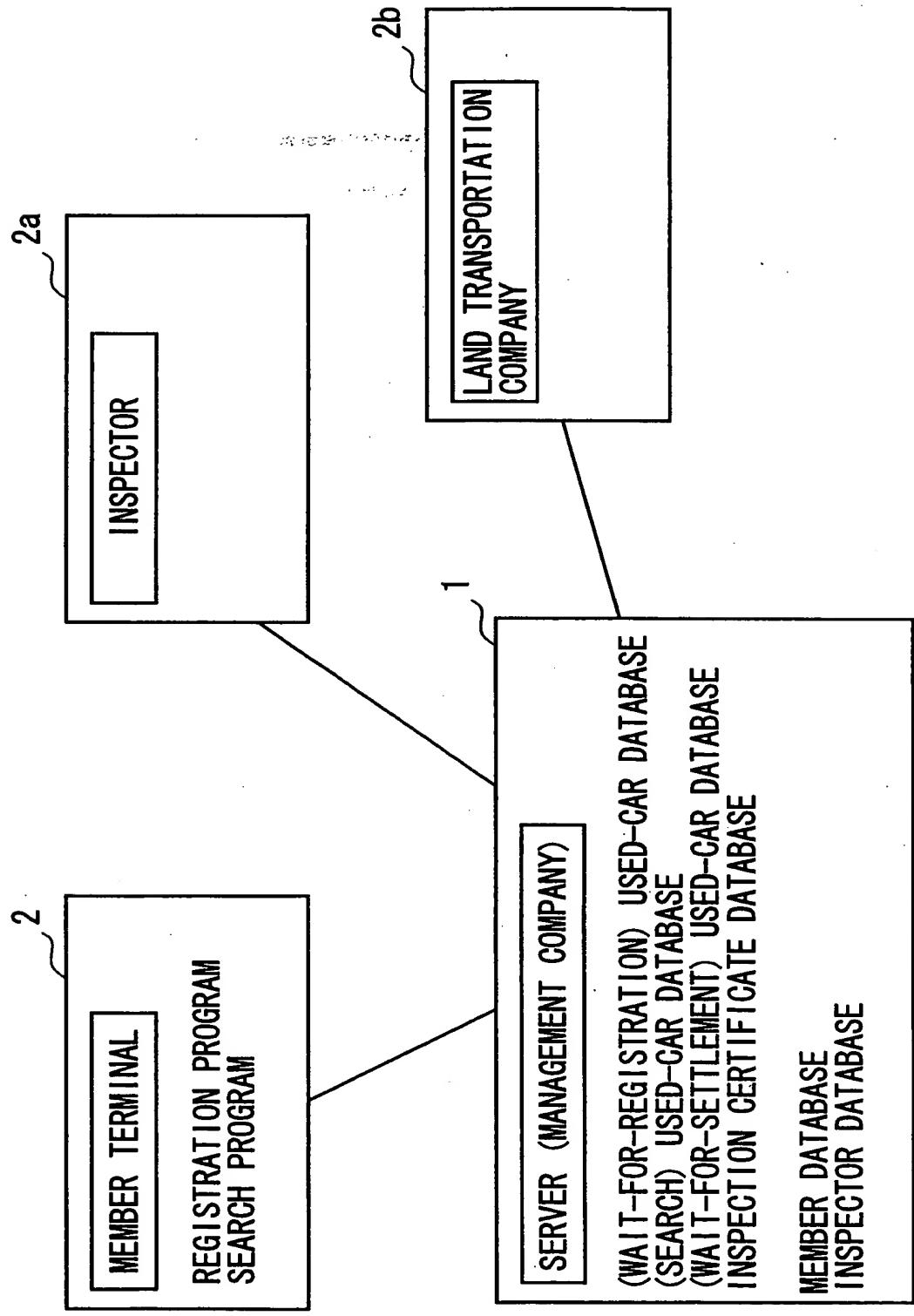
27 LCD

29 scanner

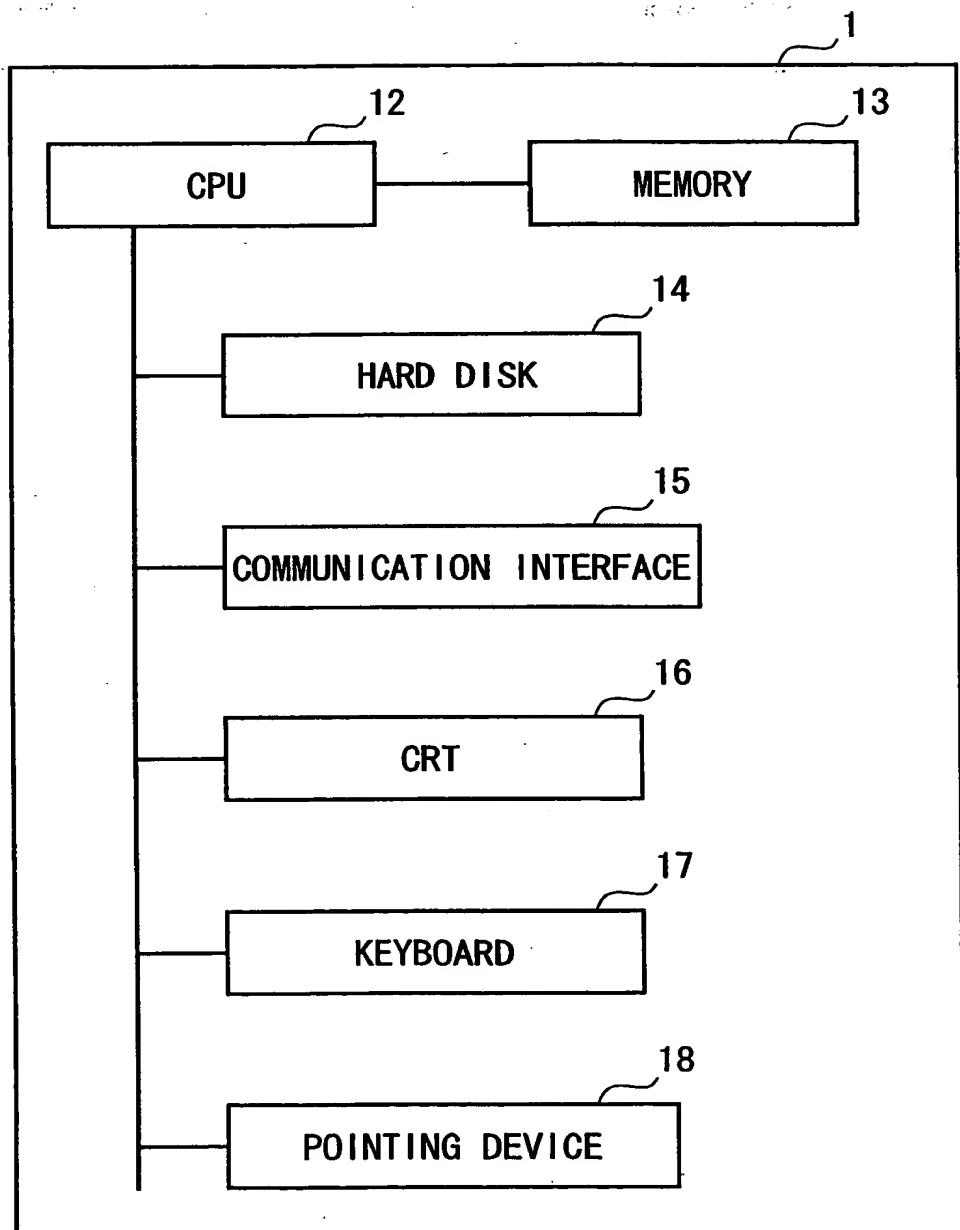
40, 42 . . "inspection certificate input" button

41, 43 . . "registration" button

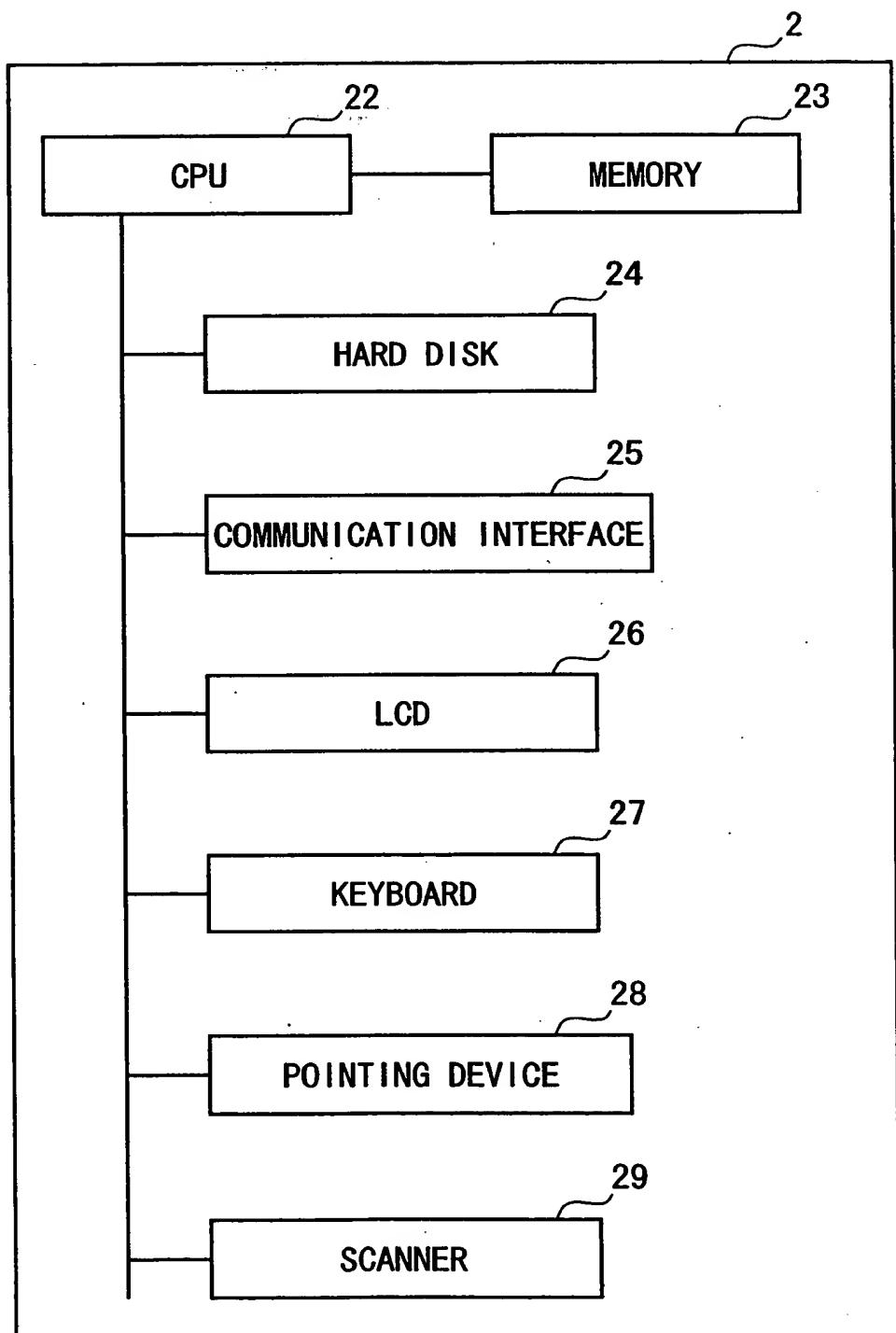
44 "purchase" button



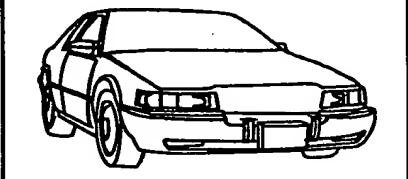
[FIG. 2]



[FIG. 3]



[FIG. 4]

MEMBER NUMBER	003497	AUTOMOBILE SHOP OOOOO	
MAKER	OOO	FRAME NUMBER	00123456
TYPE	E-JZZ31	DISPLACEMENT	3000cc
NAME OF CAR	OOO	SAFETY CHECK EXPIRATION DATE	AUGUST, 2000
GRADE	GT	MILEAGE	30,000km
SHAPE	2CP	SALES POINT	
APPLICATION	FOR PRIVATE USE	SUPREME CAR	
EXTERIOR COATING COLOR	BLUE	PHOTO INPUT	
COLOR NO.	8J5		
INTERIOR COATING COLOR	GRAY	40	
FUEL	GASOLINE	41	
GEAR SHIFT	FA	INSPECTION CERTIFICATE INPUT	
COOLING SYSTEM	AAC	REGISTRATION	
EQUIPMENT	PS PW AW DP		
POSSIBLE DELIVERY DATE	IMMEDIATE TIME		
SALES PRICE (UNIT : TEN THOUSANDS)	135		

[FIG. 5]

REGISTERED WITH CAR MANAGEMENT NUMBER "5001234"
PRINT AND STORE DATA ON SCREEN

PRINT

SALES DEALER
NUMBER

003497

AUTOMOBILE SHOP OOOO

MAKER

OOO

FRAME NUMBER

00123456

TYPE

E-JZZ31

DISPLACEMENT

3000cc

NAME OF CAR

OOO

SAFETY CHECK
EXPIRATION DATE

AUGUST, 2000

GRADE

GT

MILEAGE

30,000km

SHAPE

2CP

APPLICATION

FOR PRIVATE USE

SALES POINT

SUPREME CAR

EXTERIOR COATING
COLOR

BLUE

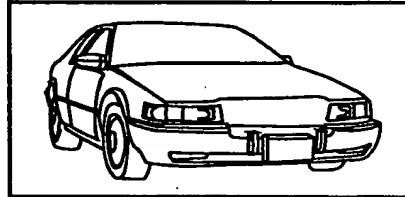
COLOR NO.

8J5

INTERIOR COATING
COLOR

GRAY

PHOTO



FUEL

GASOLINE

GEAR SHIFT

FA

COOLING SYSTEM

AAC

EQUIPMENT

PS PW AW DP

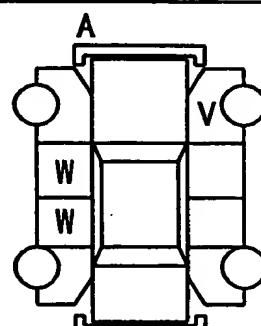
POSSIBLE DELIVERY
DATE

IMMEDIATE TIME

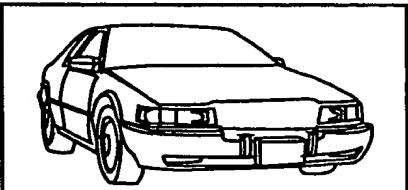
SALES PRICE (UNIT
: TEN THOUSANDS)

135

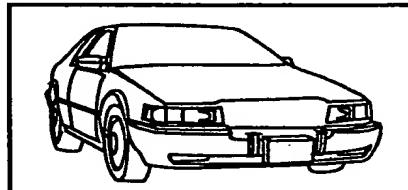
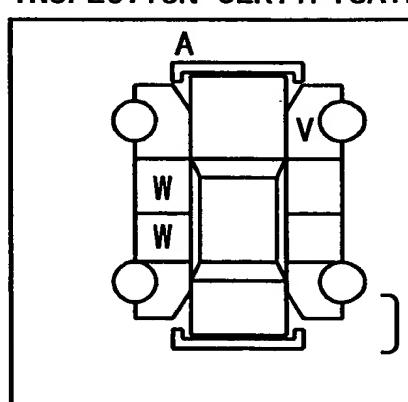
INSPECTION CERTIFICATE



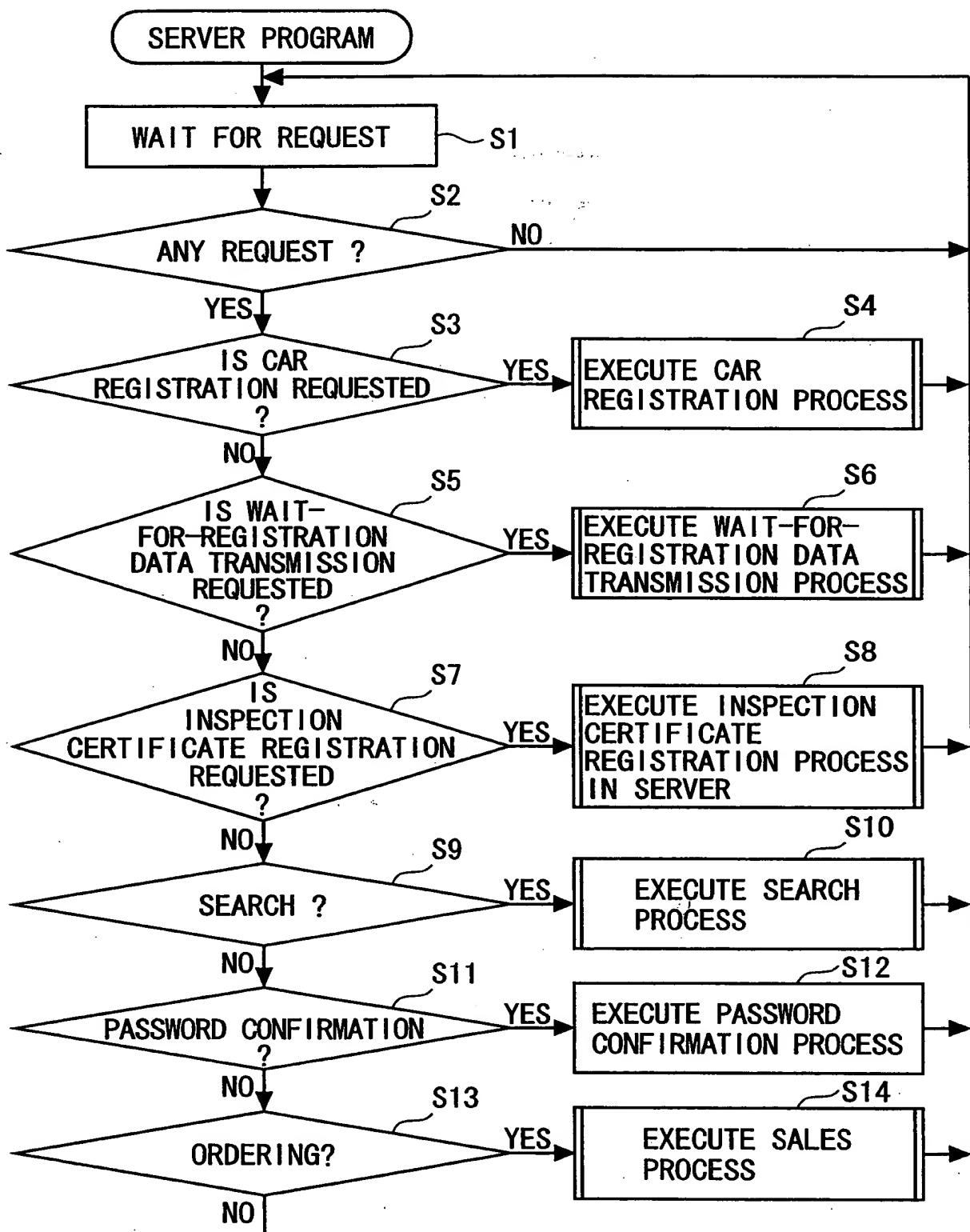
[FIG. 6]

INSPECTOR NUMBER	0060	TARO—	
CAR MANAGEMENT NUMBER	5001234	CHECK DATE	
MEMBER NUMBER	003497	AUTOMOBILE SHOPOOOO	
MAKER	OOO	FRAME NUMBER	00123456
TYPE	E-JZZ31	DISPLACEMENT	3000cc
NAME OF CAR	OOO	SAFETY CHECK EXPIRATION DATE	AUGUST, 2000
GRADE	GT	MILEAGE	30,000km
SHAPE	2CP		
APPLICATION	FOR PRIVATE USE	SALES POINT	SUPREME CAR
EXTERIOR COATING COLOR	BLUE		
COLOR NO.	8J5		
INTERIOR COATING COLOR	GRAY		
FUEL	GASOLINE	PHOTO INPUT	
GEAR SHIFT	FA		
COOLING SYSTEM	AAC		
EQUIPMENT	PS PW AW DP		
POSSIBLE DELIVERY DATE	IMMEDIATE TIME	42	43
SALES PRICE (UNIT : TEN THOUSANDS)	135	INSPECTION CERTIFICATE INPUT	REGISTRATION

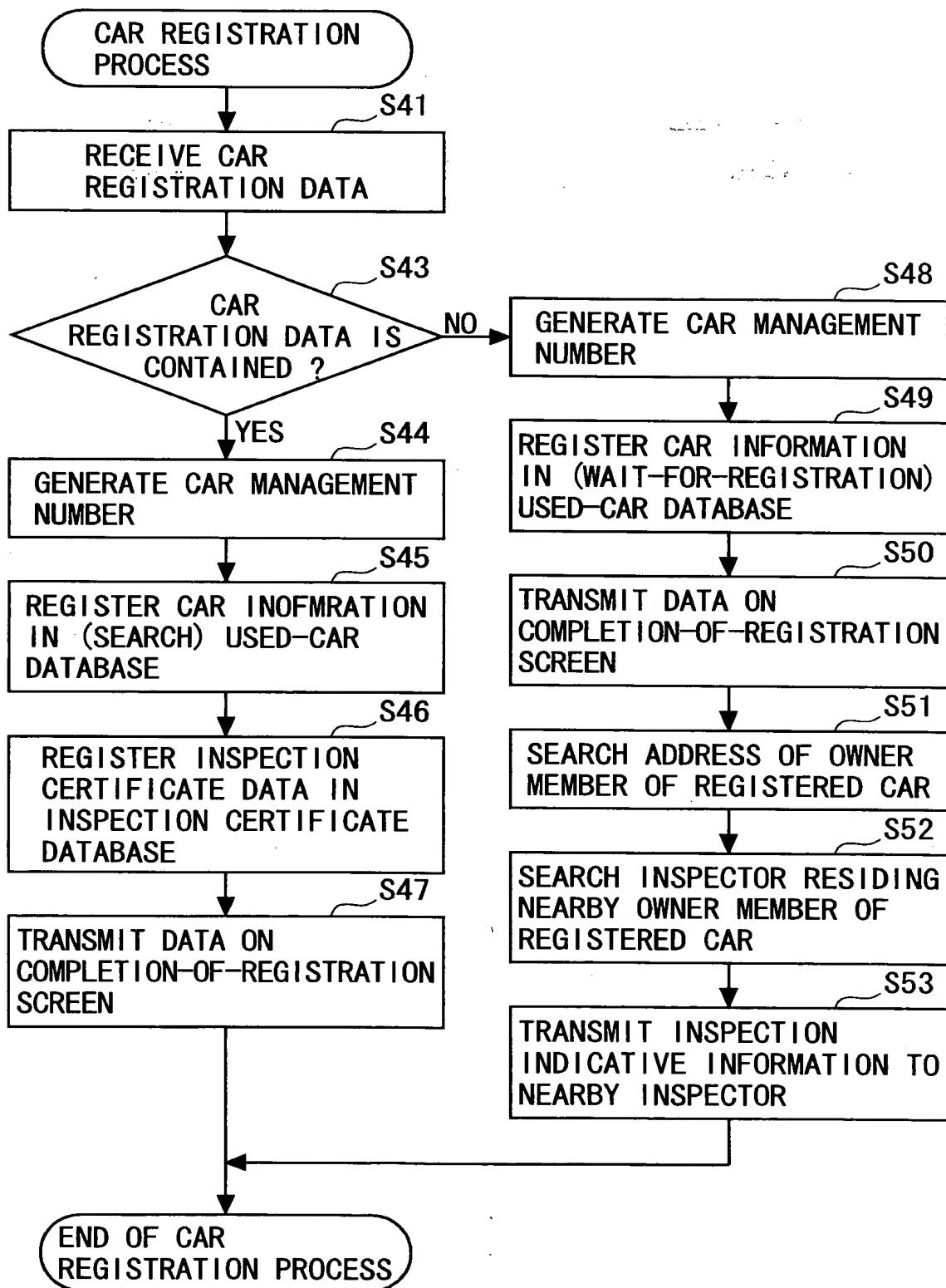
[FIG. 7]

SALES MEMBER NUMBER	003497	AUTOMOBILE SHOPoooo
MAKER	OOO	
TYPE	E-JZZ31	
NAME OF CAR	OOO	SALES POINT
GRADE	GT	SUPREME CAR
SHAPE	2CP	
APPLICATION	FOR PRIVATE USE	
EXTERIOR COATING COLOR	BLUE	
COLOR NO.	8J5	
INTERIOR COATING COLOR	GRAY	
FRAME NUMBER	00123456	
DISPLACEMENT	3000cc	
SAFETY CHECK EXPIRATION DATE	AUGUST, 2000	INSPECTION CERTIFICATE
MILEAGE	30,000km	
FUEL	GASOLINE	
GEAR SHIFT	FA	
COOLING SYSTEM	AAC	
EQUIPMENT	PS PW AW DP	
POSSIBLE DELIVERY DATE	IMMEDIATE TIME	
SALES PRICE (UNIT : TEN THOUSANDS)	140	PURCHASE 44

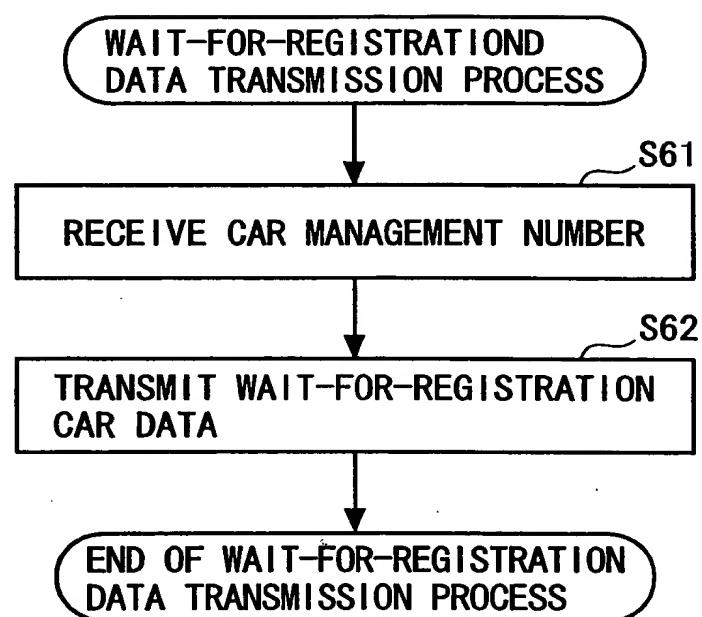
[FIG. 8]



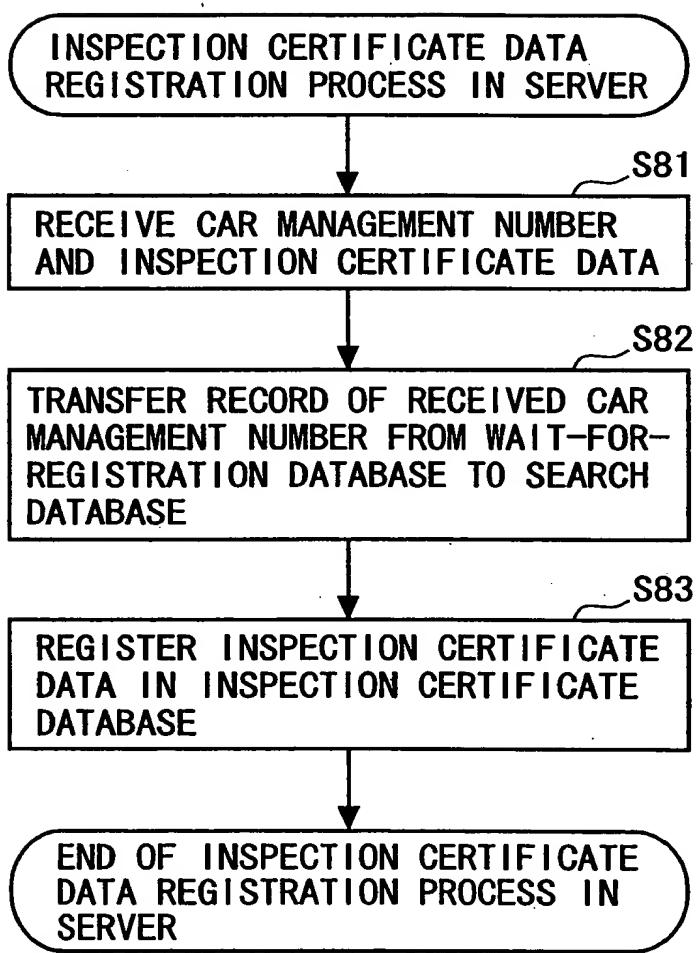
[FIG.9]



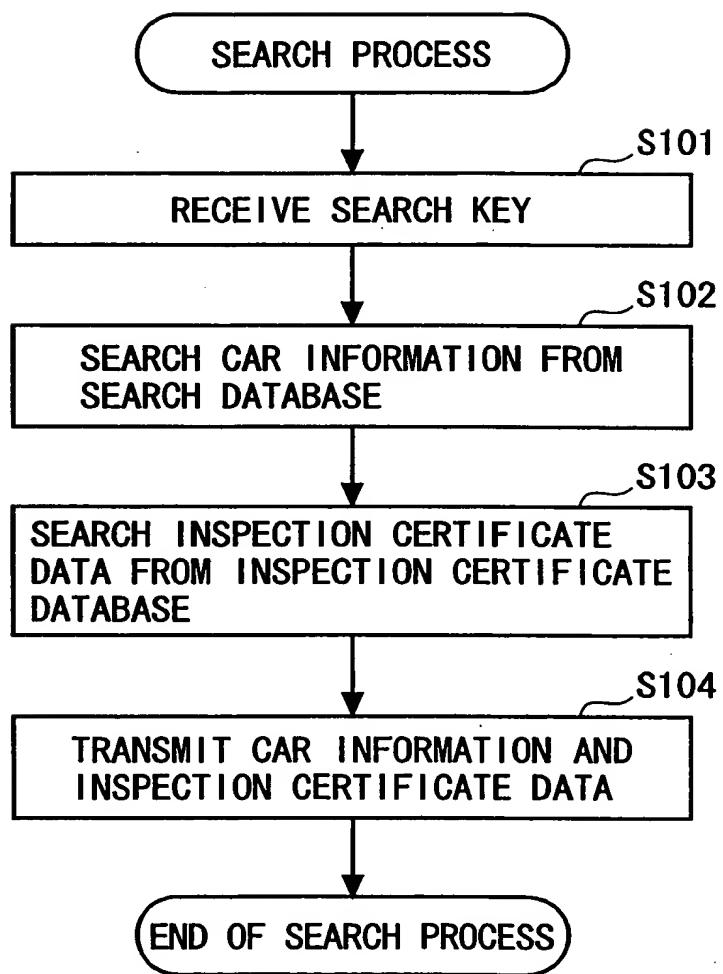
[FIG. 10]



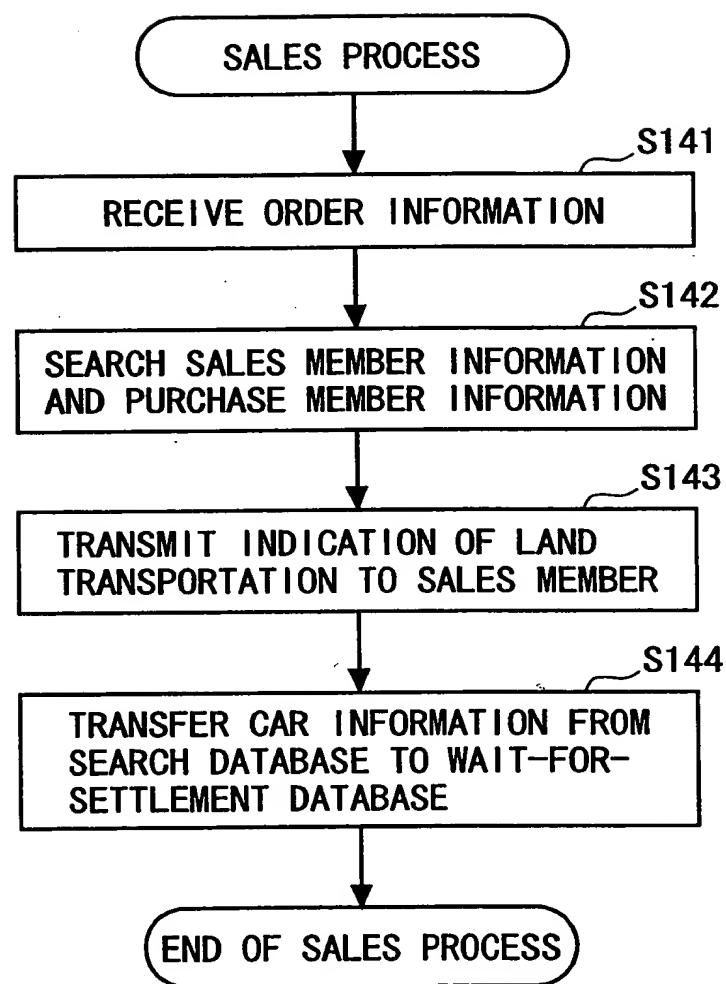
[FIG. 11]



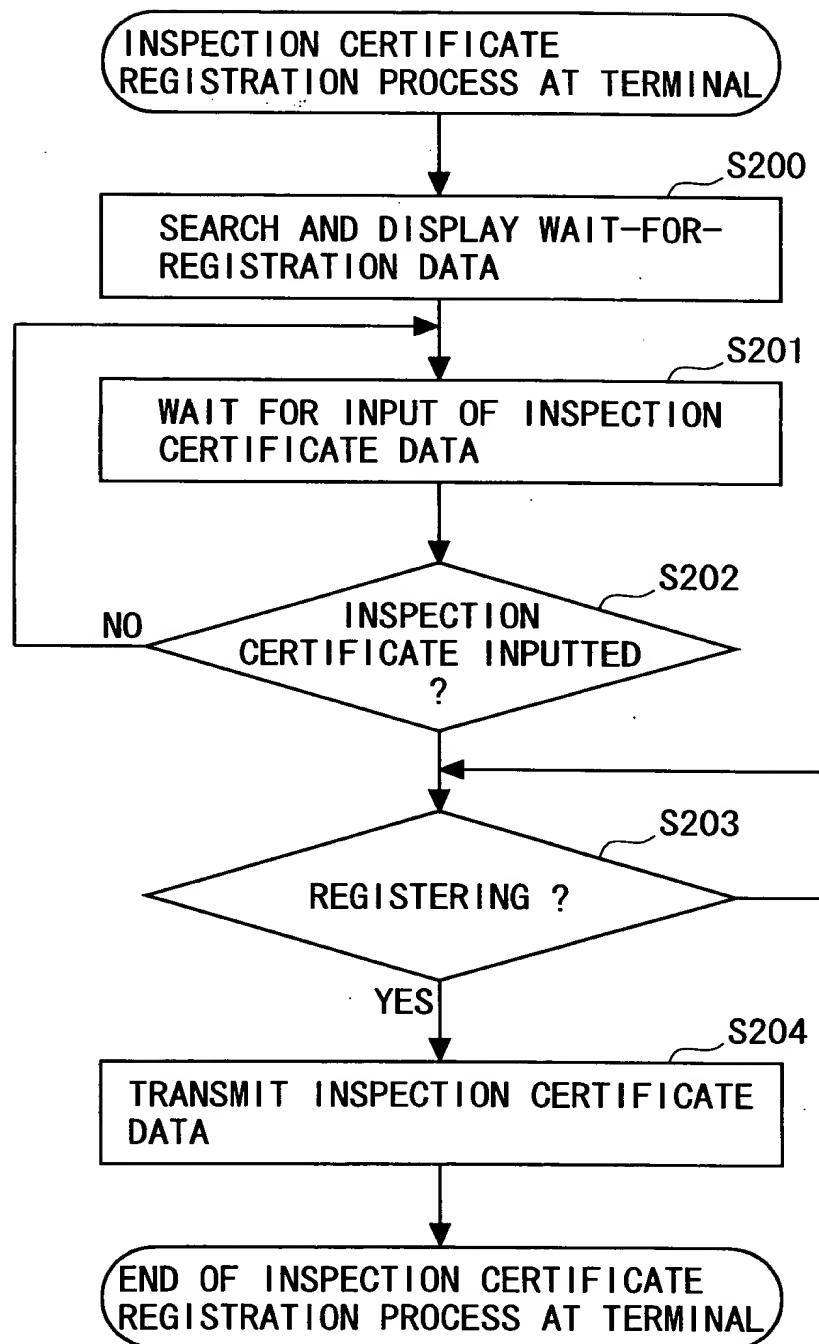
[FIG. 12]



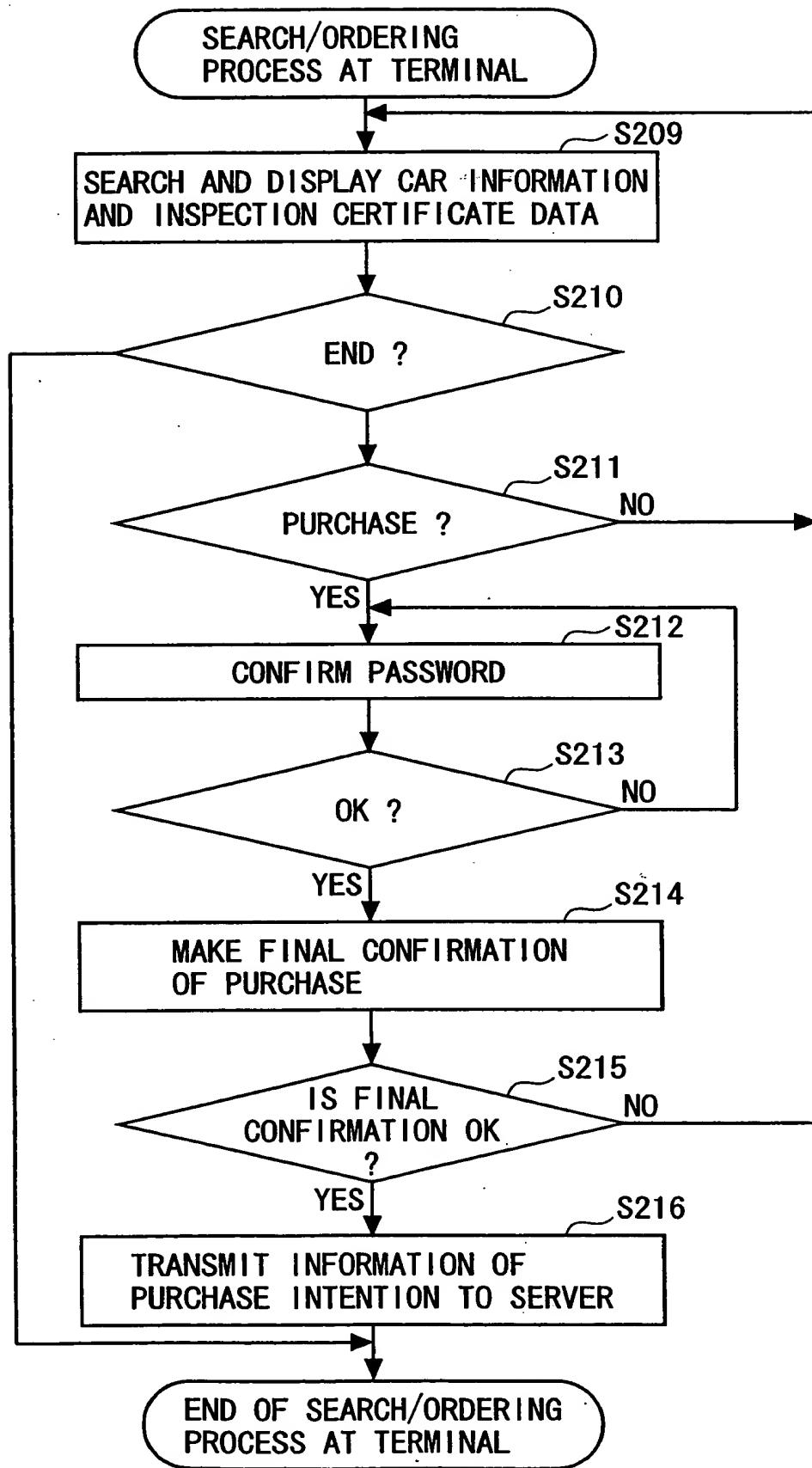
[FIG. 13]



[FIG.14]



[FIG. 15]



[Name of Document] ABSTRACT

[Abstract]

[Object]

This invention is to provide an information processing technology of the present invention is capable of speeding up a process that a prospective buyer of a used car determines an intention of purchasing the car.

[Solving Means]

This is a car sale information providing system which includes:
car information storage means (13, 14) stored with mappings of car information containing a name, a type, a year model etc of a car to car inspection information obtained as a result of inspecting the car concerned,

car information input means (27, 28) for inputting the car information and getting the car information stored in the car information storage means (13, 14),

search means (12) for outputting an input screen for searching the car information stored in the car information storage means (13, 14), and searching based on conditions inputted, and

car information output means (26), for outputting display information, including a purchase indication interface for transmitting car purchase information containing the searched car information and the car inspection information corresponding to the car information.

[Selected Drawing] FIG. 1